

City of Alexandria, Virginia

46
6-26-01

MEMORANDUM

DATE: JUNE 22, 2001

TO: THE HONORABLE MAYOR AND MEMBERS OF CITY COUNCIL

FROM: PHILIP SUNDERLAND, CITY MANAGER *PS*

SUBJECT: COMMONWEALTH TRANSPORTATION BOARD (CTB) YEAR 2000 PRE-ALLOCATION HEARING (JULY 9, 2001)

ISSUE: The City of Alexandria's Year 2001 testimony to the Commonwealth Transportation Board for the Pre-allocation Hearing scheduled for July 9, 2001, at Fairfax City Hall.

RECOMMENDATION: That City Council:

- (1) Approve the list of transportation projects discussed below for presentation by the Mayor to the Commonwealth Transportation Board (CTB) for the Northern Virginia District at the July 9 pre-allocation hearing; and
- (2) Request that staff prepare letters for the Mayor's signature listing the City's priorities to the Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) and the Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transportation (VDRPT), as appropriate.

DISCUSSION: The Commonwealth Transportation Board directs the allocation of state and Federal monies from various sources to selected transportation projects. In order to determine which transportation projects will receive funding, the CTB conducts a series of pre-allocation hearings each year in every district in the Commonwealth of Virginia. The hearings provide the local governments, regional bodies (including the Northern Virginia Transportation Commission, the Transportation Coordinating Council (TCC) and the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (WMATA), and interested citizens and organizations a forum to provide input on the transportation needs and priority projects for the coming fiscal year, as well as to identify priority projects for funding in later years of the state's Six Year Transportation Improvement Program (TIP).

The state's TIP includes projects funded through Interstate, Primary, Secondary, and Urban Highway System funds. The TIP also includes special projects funded through federal funds provided by the Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century (TEA 21, which previously was known as the Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act), which includes the following program funds: Congestion Mitigation/Air Quality (CMAQ), Regional Surface Transportation Program (RSTP), Statewide Surface Transportation Program (SSTP), and Enhancement and Safety. Projects allocated from Discretionary and Experimental funds are also included. The

CTB will allocate funds for the Six Year Plan in Fall of 2001. The projects discussed in this memorandum reflect the City's priority projects that have a high probability of being funded within the CTB's currently available funding stream. for the next six years.

The following are staff's recommendations for testimony at the July 9 pre-allocation hearing, including a description of Alexandria projects, categorized by the status of the project (new funding request and continued funding request) and sub-categorized by the funding source. The CTB allocation of certain funds, such as Urban Highway System Funds, represents a state adopted plan that a locality can amend at a later date, if project priorities or project scope changes. Funds saved remain allocated to that locality by the state for transportation capital purposes. A locality can also seek CTB approval of the transfer of Urban Highway System Funds from street and highway capital purposes to transit capital purposes. However, any allocations or reallocations need to fit within the state's available funds in any given year of the State Six-Year Plan.

I. REQUEST FUNDING FOR NEW PROJECTS FOR THE SIX YEAR PLAN

A. CONGESTION MITIGATION/AIR QUALITY IMPROVEMENT (CMAQ) FUND

The following new projects should be recommended to CTB for funding through the Congestion Mitigation/Air Quality improvement fund. These projects have previously been endorsed by the TCC through its FY 2002 prioritization process.

City Transportation Demand Management (TDM) Program - Provide a start-up match for Alexandria employers to begin offering alternative commute programs to their employees, such as car/vanpooling, using transit, telecommuting, etc. Alternative commute programs help reduce traffic congestion, reduce automobile emissions, improve mobility, and enhance the quality of life for all.

Media Program to Promote TDMs -Develop a comprehensive media package, that includes a video, website, brochure, and slideshow, to increase awareness of alternative travel methods available and to inform citizens and commuters about transportation projects, road closures, construction projects and special events.

Construct Duke Street Pedestrian Bridge near Cameron Station - Construct a pedestrian bridge over Duke Street near the Cameron Station development to increase pedestrian access and decrease traffic congestion and automobile emissions by increasing pedestrian and bike travel and transit usage.

Old Town Traffic Study of Congestion Reduction Measures - Conduct a study to determine the best alternatives to reduce traffic congestion and improve access to Old Town Alexandria. The analysis will include existing and potential parking improvements. The goal of the study is to decrease traffic congestion and automobile

emissions, improve traffic throughput, and improve access to Old Town by examining potential improvements to traffic flow. The study will include existing and potential new locations for on-street, off-street, and remote parking in order to reduce congestion and decrease emissions for automobiles and tour buses in Old Town.

Sidewalk Connection Improvements near Metro Stations and Bus Stops - Study sidewalk connectivity to determine and correct deficiencies specifically in areas adjacent to Metro stations and bus stops. This will provide for improved access to Metrorail stations for pedestrians and bicyclists, encouraging the use of transit and decreasing traffic congestion.

B. TRANSPORTATION ENHANCEMENT PROGRAM

Eisenhower Greenway Project - The City has submitted a grant application to receive Transportation Enhancement funds for the project. This is Phase 1 of the Eisenhower Avenue Multi-Use Trail Enhancement /Expansion Project. The project stretches from northeast of the Hensley Park Bridge to the west end of the Telegraph Road Bridge. The existing trail will be replaced from the south side of Eisenhower Avenue, from Telegraph Road west to a point on Eisenhower Avenue. The trail will fork with one branch leading to Hensley Park and the other branch linking with the existing Holmes Run Trail. An underpass allowing those on the Holmes Run branch to safely cross beneath Eisenhower is included. The project is anticipated to take five years from design through construction. Projected cost for the project is \$834,000. A local 20 percent match for the project will be provided by the City. We have just been awarded \$372,000 for the first phase, but we still need the full projected funding to complete this project.

II. REQUEST CONTINUED FUNDING FOR PROJECTS PROGRAMMED IN THE SIX YEAR PLAN BETWEEN FY 2002-2007

Staff recommends that the City request that all of the Alexandria projects with money programmed in the State's Six Year Plan remain fully funded at this time. These projects are as follows:

URBAN HIGHWAY SYSTEM FUNDS

Beauregard/King Street Intersection - The need for improvements at the Beauregard Street/King Street (Virginia Route 7) Intersection and on King Street between I-395 and the western City limit was analyzed as part of the Beauregard Street Corridor Study in 1995 and 1996. A task force, comprised of VDOT, Arlington County, and City staff, in 1996 recommended that VDOT construct a full interchange with a six lane King Street being elevated above Beauregard Street. The project, as originally envisioned, was estimated to cost \$33,677,000. The project has previously received \$25,108,000 in funding. The remaining cost for the project is programmed in the State's Six Year Plan.

This project is included in the City's FY 2002-2007 Capital Improvement Program. The scope of work for the project is currently being revised to eliminate the grade separation and to study only an at-grade intersection which VDOT is reviewing with the affected jurisdictions. We are asking CTB to continue funding this project at previous levels until the redesign is completed and we have new cost estimates. This project will be brought back to Council after the concept design stage is finished.

Mill Road Realignment and Extension - The first phase of this project will realign Mill Road in order to remove hazardous curves. The second phase will extend Mill Road west from the Telegraph Road overpass to Eisenhower Avenue beyond the new Virginia Department of Motor Vehicles offices. The project cost was initially estimated to be \$1,750,000, but updated estimates indicate the project cost to be \$2,250,000 and the City is requesting an additional \$500,000 in Urban Funds for this project. This project and the 2% match are programmed in the City's 2002 - 2007 CIP. Money for this project is programmed in the State's Six Year Plan until FY 2003.

Eisenhower Avenue-to-Duke Street Connector - A condition for the state funding of the Eisenhower Avenue Connector Interchange was that the City would construct an additional Eisenhower Avenue-to-Duke Street connection. A City task force has been formed which will review Alternate 5, originally endorsed by City Council in 1993, review additional, alternative alignments to Duke Street that may be feasible from Eisenhower Avenue between Telegraph Road and South Van Dorn Street, review a no-build alternative and report to City Council their recommendations. To date, the state has allocated \$8,432,000 for this project.

Van Dorn Street Safety Improvements - The state has allocated \$1,500,000 in Urban Highway System Funds for a construction project to eliminate safety hazards in the Van Dorn Street corridor between Edsall Road and Pickett Street, including improved traffic signalization, crosswalks, sidewalks, curb and gutter improvements to medians and landscaping. This area was the site of a pedestrian fatality in 1996. VDOT began the project in the Fall of 1998 and hired an engineering firm to compile traffic data to be used in the final design plans for possible improvements. The project has been included in the City's approved FY 2002-2007 CIP with a 2% local match. This project was fully funded in FY 2002. Staff recommends that VDOT move ahead with this safety improvement project even though a Van Dorn Street Corridor Study will be taking place in the future.

III. INDICATE CONTINUED SUPPORT FOR ON-GOING/FUNDED PROJECTS IN THE SIX YEAR TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENT PLAN.

A. URBAN HIGHWAY SYSTEM FUNDS

King Street Metro Station Area Improvements - A King Street Station Area Pedestrian Study was completed by the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority in February 1999. The study provides a comprehensive analysis of the pedestrian needs in the King

Street area and offers detailed engineering and cost assessments for many improvement options that were suggested by the King Street Task Force. The following project is under design as a part of these improvements:

Platform Extension - This project extends the rail platform and constructs a new entrance to the King Street Metro Station on Commonwealth Avenue. This project will increase pedestrian safety by significantly reducing the traffic and pedestrian conflicts for pedestrians crossing King Street to get into the station. WMATA has begun design work on this project and the final piece of funding, the sale of a Northern Virginia Planning District (NVPD) bond approved by the General Assembly in 1999, will be needed in the Fall of 2001 if the work is to continue.

Staff recommends that the City's testimony include the continued need for funding of pedestrian and station improvements to the King Street Metro Station area including the expeditious sale of the NVPD bonds in the Fall of 2001. The City's testimony should reflect the need for the bond sale in the Fall for improved pedestrian circulation and safety in this corridor. The Commonwealth Transportation Board should be encouraged to support the City's efforts to improve the upper King Street area.

**B. CONGESTION MITIGATION AND AIR QUALITY IMPROVEMENT
(CMAQ) FUND AND REGIONAL SURFACE TRANSPORTATION (RSTP)
PROGRAM FUND - Transportation Coordinating Council**

Traffic Signal Computer Upgrade - A total of \$2.5 million in CMAQ funding for the City's Traffic Signal Upgrade project was allocated prior to FY 2000. Combined with \$500,000 in City's funds committed in the CIP, the City will complete the replacement of the centralized traffic computer system and add the remaining non-networked intersections to the system. The Signal Upgrade contract was awarded in January 1998. Phase 1 is nearing completion and Phase 2 (adding the non-networked signals to the system) will be complete in calendar year 2003. Phase 3 will include the experimental use of state-of-the-art video monitoring and other advances and will begin implementation in 2003. Phases 1 and 2 are fully funded and have been TCC endorsed. Funding for Phase 3 will be requested during the next funding cycle for CMAQ money.

**IV. REQUEST FUNDING FROM VDRPT FOR YEARLY GRANT FOR THE
RIDESHARE PROGRAM**

Alexandria Rideshare - The City annually receives a grant for the continued operation of the rideshare program, Alexandria Rideshare, from the Department of Rail and Public Transportation (VDRPT). For FY 2002, the City is requesting \$170,000 in grant funding, which represents no increase in funds from the previous year. Local matching funds are included in the City's budget.

V. REQUEST FULL FUNDING FROM THE STATE FOR THE WOODROW WILSON BRIDGE PROJECT TO ENSURE THAT THE FOLLOWING PROJECT ELEMENTS ARE CONSTRUCTED

To date the state has only committed \$35 million for its share of the Woodrow Wilson Bridge project which is not enough to cover all of the work to be done in Virginia including the following projects.

Telegraph Road/Duke Street/I-95 Interchange Redesign - The Woodrow Wilson Bridge project includes the redesign of the eastern and western portions of the Telegraph Road Interchange. The intention of this work is to reduce the traffic congestion resulting from complex merging and traffic crossing patterns on southbound Telegraph Road in the approach to the I-95 Interchange from Duke Street.

Mill Road Access Ramps - The Woodrow Wilson Bridge project also includes ramps connecting I-95 over Mill Road. These ramps will provide enhanced access into and out of the Eisenhower Valley.

It is imperative that access to the Eisenhower Avenue corridor be improved at the Telegraph Road interchange before the development projects in this area are complete. These projects are key to maintaining that access.

VI. SUPPORT PROJECTS OF REGIONAL INTEREST:

There are several regional projects that the City Council should consider endorsing. City funding is required for matching Federal and state Funds at the Northern Virginia Transportation Commission and for Metrobus/Metrorail Car Replacement. The following are the projects of regional significance that merit endorsement:

Metrobus and Metrorail Replacement and Rehabilitation - The annual replacement of buses and rail cars using Congestion Mitigation/Air Quality funds is important to maintain a high quality of rail and bus service and to reduce the fiscal impact on the participating jurisdictions. The City match is included in the approved FY 2002-2007 Capital Improvement Program.

State Route 236 - This project will improve the regional flow of traffic as Route 236 conveys 80,000 vehicles per day. The origin and destination studies reveal that this traffic is primarily composed of regional commuters entering the inner beltway business and residential nodes. The proposed project will increase arterial capacity through major reconstruction of auxiliary lanes and through a variety of access management redesign techniques.

Metrobus, Metrorail and DASH - The Washington Area Transit Authority's bus and rail capital improvement program costs are funded by a combination of federal, state and local funds, and DASH transit system capital costs are funded by a combination of state and local funds. For both of these transit systems, state urban funds have been previously planned and programmed to help the City meet its currently contemplated obligations over the next six years. As a result the City considers it a high priority that the state continue its urban funds transit funding stream at these current levels.

NVTC and VRE State Administrative/Fuels, Tires, and Maintenance (FTM), Capital and Related Grants - The City should consider endorsing the state and federal grants submitted by NVTC (as shown below) to help defray NVTC, WMATA, local bus systems, and the Virginia Railway Express operating and capital costs.

- 1. FY 2002 grant request to VDRPT for \$80,850,000*** to defray the public transportation costs to NVTC and its members for administration, fuels, tires, lubricants, and maintenance parts.
- 2. FY 2002 grant request to VDRPT for up to \$38,500,000*** to defray up to 40% of the cost borne by NVTC and its members for equipment, facilities and the associated expenses for any approved capital grant.
- 3. FY 2002 VRE grant request to VDRPT to seek up to \$6,500,000*** for FTM and administrative costs ***and up to \$8,200,000 for capital costs.***
- 4. FY 2002 application to VDRPT for a grant of \$145,000*** for financial assistance for continuing a three-year marketing project to promote transit that began last year.

Council of Governments Transportation Control Measures - The City has been participating in several regional Transportation Control Measures administered by the Washington Area Council of Governments, including the Employer Outreach Program, the Guaranteed Ride Home Program and Metrobus Fare Buy Downs. The Transportation Coordinating Council package will include the funding needs for these programs.

FISCAL IMPACT: The following projects, described previously, require local matching funds from the City. These funds are available either in City's the approved FY 2002-2007 CIP or from non-city resources that are anticipated to be available in FY 2002.

1. Eisenhower Greenway Project
2. Beauregard/King Street Intersection Improvements
3. Mill Road Realignment and Extension
4. Eisenhower Ave./Duke Street Connector
5. Van Dorn Street Safety Improvements
6. King Street Metro Station Area Improvements

7. Traffic Signal Computer Upgrade
8. Alexandria Rideshare

Local Matching Funds for federal and state operating and capital assistance received at the Northern Virginia Transportation Commission are included in the City's approved FY 2002 Transit Subsidies budget for Metrobus Replacement and Rehabilitation.

It is anticipated that there will be no local matching funds from the City required for all other projects included herein.

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